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SOCIOLOGICAL CONSTRUCTION LINES. IV

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SECTION VII. IS SOCIOLOGY METAPHYSICAL?¹

If social phenomena are psychic, is sociology therefore metaphysical? Are these phenomena too inaccessible to observation to be successfully studied by the methods of science without aid from those of metaphysics? This question, having been raised and emphasized,² stands at this point across our path.

Dr. Fogel asserts that for adequate study of social phenomena there is required some other method of approach than those known to natural science; and he says:

The other and more direct mode of approach is through appreciation. By appreciation I mean a sympathetic identification of the subject or individual with the world in which the individual sees himself as an agent realizing his world in an experience which is individual for himself. He thinks himself as part of the stream of the world-process, and so looks at the rest of this stream as like himself in that it can be realized by him just as he realizes his own experience; or, in other words, he is at fellowship with the world, so that the distinction between subject and object is no longer an absolute one.³

This use of the word "appreciation" is based upon the metaphysical doctrine of Professor Royce—the doctrine, namely, that there is in ultimate truth but one consciousness, and what we call conscious individuals are, in reality, waves of one vast sea. Or, to employ a figure of Professor Royce's, souls are like monads, which may indeed have no windows, but which also have no roofs, and but one sky into which all look up and see each other reflected there. Consciousness, then, is not a strictly individual phenomenon, but each finite self is so much of the absolute self as comes to

¹ This topic absorbs the present section. Discussion of the other questions raised at the close of sec. vi will follow immediately.

² Philip H. Fogel, "Metaphysical Elements in Sociology," *American Journal of Sociology*, November, 1904, and January, 1905.

³ *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. X, p. 356.

accentuated consciousness in one succession of localized experience. As breathing the air in my room I breathe of the air that surrounds the planet, so in living my life I share in the life of the universe, and in knowing myself I know both God and all men; and this direct knowledge is "appreciation." Thus "we, seemingly isolated and momentary beings, do share in the organic life of the one Self."⁴ My friend "is real to me by virtue of our organic unity in the one Self."⁵ The appreciations of the one spirit "are indeed his own, for he is alone, and there is none beside him. Yet in them we all share, for that fact is what binds us together."⁶ "A and B are in their actual and appreciable relations, by virtue of the part they both play, in the inner self-consciousness of the organic and inclusive self."⁷

We are told that certain essential spiritual realities, with which sociology must deal, can be known only by this method of appreciation. Says Dr. Fogel: "When we get to the real study of social phenomena and want to get the inner springs of sociality, we must go to appreciation," for the essential objects of such study "are beyond the sphere of description."⁸

Accordingly, these essential realities, which are revealed by "appreciation," are said to be inaccessible to the methods of unmetaphysical science because those methods can deal only with what is "*describable*," "*permanent*," and "*public*."⁹ And the appreciable realities are not "*describable*," because they do not appear in the categories of description, such as space, time, similarity, difference, and causality. Especially they are not caused, in the scientific sense; their only cause is "justification" to self-consciousness. Their categories are categories of interest, worth, and purpose, and such categories do not make description possible. They are not "*permanent*," because appreciation is a fleeting experience that cannot be recalled at will, and remembered in terms of unchanging and universally valid categories of experience, as can the objects which science successfully handles. Nor are they "*public*" in the sense, essential to science, of being open

⁴ Royce, *Spirit of Modern Philosophy*, p. 407.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 409.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 412.

⁸ *Loc. cit.*, p. 374.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 413.

⁹ Royce, *op. cit.*, pp. 383-92.

alike to all normal observers under like conditions, but the knowledge gained by "appreciation" is peculiar to the individual, essentially private and incommunicable.

The aim of this section is to show that all the phenomena treated by sociology are accessible to purely scientific methods, and that it is entirely unnecessary to the purposes of sociology that light should be shed on these phenomena by any metaphysical doctrine.

The question whether the category of causality applies to social phenomena will meet us in a later section, and therefore may be treated lightly here. And we will defer to the latter part of this section the inquiry whether the teleological nature of sociology, its dealing with valuations and ideals, requires that scientific method shall at least be supplemented by a "philosophic method." For the present clearness will be promoted by confining our attention to the question whether any of the phenomena essential to sociology are inaccessible to observation and description, and whether the necessary appreciation of human experience-values is at all dependent upon any metaphysical doctrine of their ultimate reality, whether such appreciation deals with anything but phenomena — as distinguished from the metaphysical realities that may be conceived to underlie phenomena, or requires any "other mode of approach" than observation and the logical processes familiar to pure science. By answering in the negative this whole group of questions we shall maintain that it only produces confusion of thought to speak of "metaphysical elements in sociology."

We should have expected it of a metaphysician that he would hold that *all sciences equally*, and all explanation, rest back finally upon metaphysical conceptions, and also that he would avoid even implying a contrast between scientific and metaphysical methods, and claim rather that metaphysics does but push the scientific methods — and no others — to yield their last drop of implication about the realities that are beyond phenomena.

Let us set out by re-emphasizing the importance to sociology of emotions and motives, of the affective phase of human experi-

ence. And let us heartily admit that emotions are not "describable" in just the same way as things, or as ideas, concepts and deeds. But we are told that emotions are not describable *at all*, because they do not appear in the categories of description. It is true they have no spatial dimensions, but neither do differentiation, correlation, chemical affinity, ether, gravitation, and other concepts of which natural science makes use, and which are public and describable objects of thought; and we need not hasten to admit that emotions are without identifiable resemblances and differences, or that they do not exist in the categories of time and causality, meaning by the last *conditioning*, being conditioned and also conditioning effects. We are told also that emotions are not "permanent," and it is true that they are transient and unreturning experiences. They do not return, yet others of the same kind may be experienced, and a *kind* of emotion is a distinct and permanent concept in the only essential sense, for it *can be recognized* whenever it occurs in our own consciousness; otherwise the word "anger" or "fear" would be meaningless except when the speaker is consciously angry or afraid. We are told, finally, that emotions are not "public," but private. And it is true that they are individual and in one sense incommunicable. But human beings are so similar that they have the same kinds of emotions. Moreover, our knowledge that our associates have emotions like our own is not due to metaphysical insight, but is a direct inference from observable phenomena. We and our associates are individuals of one species, products of a common evolution, inheriting capacities for the same types of subjective experience; and we manifest our experiences by conduct that is common to the individuals of our kind, which each beholder understands because it has been the familiar accompaniment of his own emotions, and accepts as evidence of similar emotions in his associates. And it is thus that we become convinced that our neighbor is angry, or afraid, or possessed by any of the numerous varieties of feeling that we learn to distinguish in ourselves and recognize in others, when by their overt conduct men display the various emotions that are characteristic of man.

The publicity and scientific tractability of emotional phe-

nomena are dependent on the inferred similarity of the experience of different individuals. But it is no more dependent upon it than all "description." "Red" is the name of a subjective experience (referred to an objective cause). Descriptive words like "long" and "true" are as really names of subjective experience as words like "angry" and "afraid." Concepts and propositions exist only in consciousness, and *all description, indeed all language*, is based upon the supposed similarity of human experience—similarity of perception and conception in case of the objective, similarity of conscious states in case of the emotional or appreciative. If it were still objected that the attempt to communicate knowledge of emotions is more liable to misunderstanding than other description, because we differ more in our feelings than in our cognitive processes, we could afford to admit, if necessary, that there is a difference of *degree*; but any difference on this account is only in degree, and may not be even that. Color-blindness that invalidates the universality and publicity of sense-perception may be as common as any equally wide departure from the normal in the great common human emotions. To assume uniformity of conception with reference to the supposedly public, scientific, and purely cognitive, even among experts in description and argument, may occasion serious misunderstanding as often as it does to attribute to men emotional similarity. Indeed, when men are looked at in broad classes in a way to suit the purposes of sociology, individual emotional idiosyncrasies may become negligible. It is not necessary that emotions of different individuals should be identical, any more than it is elsewhere essential to the purposes of science that specimens of the same species should be identical. The botanist does not despair because specimens of the same variety of plant are not identical, though no two leaves in all June be quite alike. And in interpreting the observable evidence, even of nice emotional differences between individual associates, we have acquired amazing skill that warns us how far to trust our inference of the emotional similarity of man, by virtue of which the motives and emotions that characterize social classes become public, as revealed in overt signs. The metaphysicians do not claim that we are especially liable to error when we take the

emotional similarity of man as a major premise for all our interpretation of the emotional meanings of his speech and conduct. Instead, they claim that this similarity is reliable. And if we are right in adding that all the "publicity" of other knowledge is equally dependent on the subjective similarity of man, then where is the need of anything more metaphysical in our appreciation of each other's emotions than in our communication of the description of a tree or a fish? We can describe to each other a tree or an emotion, because of the similarity of our sense-perceptions in the one case, and of our emotions in the other. In both cases alike the "publicity" is based on the similarity. The known similarity is no more essential and no more metaphysical in the one case than in the other. And in neither case is our knowledge of the reliable similarity metaphysically derived, nor due to metaphysical contributions to thought, nor peculiar to metaphysicians, but common to all normal men.

It is true the five senses give us no direct access to an objective psychic world. We cannot smell our neighbor's emotion, nor touch his thought with our fingers, nor taste with our tongues his interests; eyes and ears are affected only by material stimuli. We are in direct contact with the psychic only in our own consciousness. Yet we know the psychic states of our neighbors, because we witness the overt manifestations of their psychic states, and know what they mean because we know what we should mean by similar manifestations. We make use of these signs as expressions of our own subjective states, and we know by the responses we elicit that our own subjective states have been correctly apprehended by those to whom these signs have been addressed.

Each self has an insensible psychic half and a sensible physical half. Selves touch and overlap and mingle in their sensible activities, though their psychic halves are isolated. Each *understands* the sensible activities that are his own, as related to his own psychic self. Each *interprets* the sensible activities of another, as similarly related to the other's self. Our notion of the other is correct in proportion as this inference of similarity is correct. Though this inference is correct in the main, yet we are not identical. Though representatives of one species and the offspring

of a common physical evolution, we differ somewhat in temperament, and as products of social evolution we differ more. And if two persons are products of alien societies, then they do not share common conventionalities of self-expression and "communication." Yet even then there is a universal language of visible expression and conduct. Even within the same nation and the same town there are differences of social development, and within the same family differences of biological inheritance; but the similarities are great and conspicuous, and the differences likely to be subtle and comparatively minute. However, there are many persons too unlike wholly to understand each other. The most prized experiences of some cannot be apprehended by other some, and that which we most hate we may never wholly comprehend, unless we hate it having disapproved it as present or possible within ourselves.

In the process of human intercourse we have developed to a wonderful degree the art of communication so as to be able to express shades of difference, and have acquired skill in interpreting, in terms of our own natures, experiences that never would have been original to ourselves. Man has an insatiable interest in the psychic activities of his associates, both for the satisfaction he takes in contemplating, analyzing, criticising, and appreciating them, and also for the practical necessity of understanding this most active, helpful or harmful, portion of his environment. Where interest is strong, there intellectual power and skill develop; and the skill of men in understanding each other is perhaps the highest everyday manifestation of intelligence. It may be that it is not only an individual skill, but also an instinct developed by the social necessities of the race. Desires and purposes are not only divined from the subtlest signs, but also foretold before they are formed. And even when men deliberately lie and pretend, employing generally understood symbols in order to deceive, their fellow-men are skilled to discover not only the meaning which the deceiver intends to convey, but also the presence of deception and the motives of the fraud. It is true this skill in reading one another breeds corresponding skill in dissimulation, but both forms of skill are tributes to the subtlety with

which we understand each other, and interpret not merely words and other conventional symbols, and deeds that are intentionally overt, but also subtle revealers of emotions, moods, and traits which their owners never meant to reveal, but endeavored to conceal. At the same time, the too frequent success of lying and dissimulation indicates that we have not direct access to the conscious states of our associates, and cannot rest back upon an assumption of the metaphysical identity of our natures, but depend for our knowledge of each other's conscious life upon our interpretations of sensible tokens.

A great portion of the world's literature exhibits the success with which the emotional phase of human experience can be "described." Conventionality is a vast monument to the fact of the communication of psychic meanings by physical signs. And many of the signals from the inner life which we learn so accurately to read are far too subtle to be conventionalized. Smiles, frowns, tones, and changes of the facial muscles, too minute to be described, are interpreted unerringly. One reads a passage full of subtle suggestion, and by his reading proves that he has felt the suggestion, and looking up he sees in the face of his listening friend that the friend has felt it too. This is communion of spirits—author, reader, and friend. Expressions of voice, countenance, and bearing, numberless and fleeting, are included in the seemingly inexhaustible signal code that reveals the rich variety of human feeling. They are mediums for the admonishing or cheering influence of the parent, friend, and lover, and instruments of the power of the man of prestige, the orator, and the commander. Not tears and sighs alone, but the slight movement of the eyelid and the almost insensible tension of the person thrill the heart of the observer, and awaken trust or suspicion, love or hate, fascination or contempt, as they signal the presence of affective experiences which the observer is prompt to recognize and estimate in terms of his own subjectivity.

Signs which we have learned to recognize as tokens of admirable or despicable traits in an associate may arouse strong feelings before we have formed definite notions of the traits of the individual in question. We may suspect and dislike, or incline to

trust and admire, a person whose qualities we have not named. This may be because the same sign can indicate a whole class of hateful or admirable traits, and we recognize the presence of the class, amiable or hateful, but have not yet learned what species of the class confronts us; or it may be because we have genuine instincts, like those that tell the animals what to shun and what to seek, but do not tell them why. Instinct might well survive longest to guide the actions that deal with the element in our environment which is both most important to our welfare and most difficult to analyze and understand, namely, our associates.

We know, then, the affective experiences of our associates by their observable and describable manifestations, interpreted by our knowledge of what similar expressions and conduct of our own have meant emotionally. These manifestations are both the intended and the unintentional; both the larger expressions which we call conduct and the minuter ones to which reference has been made. Of course, the speculator, if he likes, is at liberty to hold that phenomena in general are nothing real, in the sense in which emotions have true reality, and that the two orders of appearance and reality are not woven into one network of the conditioning and the conditioned. But the scientist must proceed as if the observable were the real, and the cure for error were more and better observation; and *so* proceeding, he will say that some things make men angry and that others make them glad, and that anger and gladness make men behave in different ways; in other words, that we can observe the vividly contrasting effects of men's emotions, of avarice, generosity, pride, humility, courage, fear, and that a trustworthy sociological maxim is: "By their fruits ye shall know them." And if we know emotions by their effects, they are as public, describable, and open to the scientific method as is electricity, which we know by its effects and by these alone. Proceeding as a scientist must proceed, we know the emotions of others by the same process of observation and inference by which we get other scientific knowledge. If this process did not include the inference of the similarity of individuals of the same species and the same society, then we should know them, not as emotions, but only as we know ether and electricity—that is, as the conditions of certain effects.

The metaphysician may add that we know them *also* by "appreciation." We do know them by appreciation of *our own* affective states, and so know by direct consciousness such examples of this class of phenomena as our own experience affords, and we can observe introspectively. These experiences are not less true *phenomena* because they are subjective. Rather than imply that the subjective is not phenomenal, it would be far truer to say that all phenomena are subjective. All phenomena, all manifestations or appearances, exist primarily in consciousness. Not only "red" and "long" are names for subjective experiences, but all the data for every science exist first in consciousness, and the question how science gets its grip on the external world is by so much harder than the question how it gets hold of the subjective activities and experiences of which it has both direct and indirect knowledge. That we can know such phenomena by both methods certainly does not make our knowledge of them less, but more, scientific. It is an erroneous assumption to treat psychic phenomena as metaphysical realities. All realities *as realities* are metaphysical, but all phenomena *as phenomena* are matter for science. This is the true distinction. Of course, sociological facts, like all others, may run back into the metaphysical, and this is no evidence that more than others they are inaccessible to science, nor any escape from the scientific duty, here as elsewhere, to trudge the path of knowledge, by observation and inference, just as far as we can before taking to the wings of metaphysical speculation. In inferring that other members of our species, whose expressions and behavior we observe, feel as we felt when under like conditions we acted as we see them do, we are simply comparing and inferring—that is, we are applying methods of science. And our knowledge of the emotions of others is, in fact, a result of this procedure without the addition of any metaphysical assumption. Appreciation of the experiences of associates is in no sense confined to metaphysicians, still less to the school of metaphysicians who teach "appreciation" as based upon the doctrine of the all-inclusive consciousness, and their doctrine cannot compel the admission of metaphysical elements into sociology. The sociologist, as a sociologist, must study

emotional phenomena, in so far as such phenomena are accessible to the methods of observation and inference.

If Dr. Fogel succeeds, as he believes he does, in convicting any sociologist of holding "that the only sort of really causal energy in social phenomena is purely physical energy,"¹⁰ may not this merely indicate, either that this particular sociologist has not set forth clearly the relation of sociology to metaphysical concepts, or possibly that Dr. Fogel has not so perfectly apprehended the sociologist's position as to avoid misunderstanding? Misunderstanding would be invited, or perhaps a misconception might be evinced, by a sociologist who should say that physical forces and social forces are one. But, on the other hand, might not the expressions, which are said to imply this, in reality mean precisely what the metaphysical monist means when he asserts that there is but one causal energy in all the universe, whose operations appear both in physical and psychic phenomena? If so, then sociologist and metaphysician will agree that the sociologist has not to recognize any causal energy other than that which is operative in the physical world. As the biologist no longer makes reference to a "vital force," so *the sociologist need make no reference to a social force.* (This requires to be read in the light of what was said in sec. v.) The notion of a purely scientific sociology that has been here set forth is not open to this line of attack by the objector who would insist upon the admission of metaphysical elements into sociology. For we hold that sociology does not need to teach anything about any causal energy whatever, but only about phenomena and the conditioning relations among them, and no phenomena, as phenomena, are metaphysical elements, neither are relations among phenomena. That psychic phenomena are true phenomena has been maintained. That they are like other phenomena in that each psychic phenomenon is conditioned by other phenomena, and a condition of other phenomena, we shall endeavor to maintain in a later section.

Dr. Fogel argues, with special elaboration, that "consciousness of kind" involves appreciation. Let us admit it; what we deny is that appreciation involves anything more metaphysical than

¹⁰ *Loc. cit.*, p. 502.

observation of conduct like our own and inference of experience like that of which we are conscious. Even the self-consciousness involved is not metaphysical, but — as argued above — is as true a phenomenon as any sense-percept. Self-consciousness for the scientist is a *phenomenon* of which he is aware without the intervention of the senses; it is both the awareness and the phenomenon, which are one. With the metaphysical nature of the phenomenon, as a scientist, he has nothing to do; and his knowledge of it no more implies a metaphysical *method* than his awareness of the external, by aid of sensation. *Introspection is a variety of observation.* Moreover, the trustworthy conviction of the similarity of human experience is not dependent on any metaphysical doctrine of “our organic unity in the one Self;” it is not peculiar to those who hold that doctrine, but common to all normal men, the trustworthiness of the conviction being sufficiently authenticated without aid from any metaphysical element. Even the strongest sympathy which aids our understanding of an associate is adequately explained by the unmetaphysical process that has been traced, supplemented by the fact that our knowledge of another’s situation arouses feelings in us like those which we believe are going on in him, since an imagined, remembered, or anticipated situation can arouse feelings as truly as an actual one.

Neither can it be maintained that “ejective” interpretation of another’s experience involves a metaphysical element. “Ejective” interpretation is called into being by our inability to secure knowledge of another’s affective states by any metaphysical shortcut. That we form “ejective” interpretation of the experience of others means that we do not understand the experience of another until we have had the like (in the only sphere open to our direct appreciation, that is) in our own consciousness; and thereafter, when we see another in similar conditions, and manifesting activities similar to those which accompanied our own experience, we infer that he is having an experience like the one we had when we were in such conditions and acting as he does; or, in other words, we eject our knowledge of our own previous experience as an explanatory element, into our notion of him. If he is stung by a wasp, and the spot grows swollen and red with a white center,

and he jumps up and down, and cries out, and says it smarts fearfully, we infer that he feels as we felt when we were stung by such an insect, showed such symptoms, and acted in a similar way. This does not require a metaphysician. By similar comparison and inference are interpreted the signs of hope, fear, anger, love, cowardice, enthusiasm, greed, and benevolence that are intelligible to all who in themselves have known the like, without aid from any more mysterious means of communion than the most unmetaphysical sociologist admits.

We accept the analysis of "consciousness of kind" and "ejective" interpretation of others which seems to Dr. Fogel to imply metaphysical elements, but question whether that seeming would appear to one who had no predilection for discovery of metaphysical elements. We heartily agree with the statement that "understanding others by reading my own experience into them is indispensable;"¹¹ but what a leap to the conclusion that follows in the next sentences:

Consequently, to get at societary facts it is a necessary preliminary that the subject connect himself vitally with the world of his investigation, so that he feels himself a part of that world as having fellowship with it. And here we are beyond doubt in the world of appreciation, and so in the preserves of metaphysics.

Dr. Fogel also argues that "imitation" requires "appreciation" as metaphysically conceived. But is it not enough for the imitator to see the outer act and its observable consequences? To see the overt act affords the idea of the act, the *ideo-motor* suggestion which alone is essential to the simpler form of imitation. To see the act and its desirable objective consequences — the nut cracked by the blow, the weight lifted by the lever — is enough to afford the idea of the act as a means, and appeal to motives for intelligent imitation. To appreciate *our own* experience in situations of a given sort is enough to afford motives to imitate one who creates such situations. For example, the applauded orator. Not only the simpler *ideo-motor* form of imitation, but also its higher forms, do not require that we metaphysically "appreciate" the experience of the person imitated by recognizing our "organic

¹¹ *Loc. cit.*, p. 371.

unity in the one Self." On the contrary, according to the theory of "ejective" interpretation, approved by metaphysicians, before we can appreciate the experience of the person imitated, we must first by imitation make the experience our own; after that we attribute to the one imitated experience like that which we have secured by imitating him, and so for the first time comprehend the inward feel of that which we imitated as an outward act, either for the sake of the outward act, for the sake of the outward consequences of the act, or for the sake of inward experiences which we inferred from *our own* previous experience would accompany the outward conditions imitated.

To summarize: We have frankly admitted the important differences between the phenomena of consciousness and other phenomena. We have admitted, moreover, the differences between the affective, and the cognitive and volitional, elements in experience, and that there is a sense in which affective experience is neither describable, permanent, nor public; that the affective phase of experience is simply *our own* appreciation of *our own* states of consciousness, and that the emotional quality of social phenomena would never be known by a being who himself had never felt emotion. But we *do* feel emotions of our own, and are therefore qualified to recognize the same varieties of emotion as evinced by others. And the self-knowledge that arises introspectively in our own consciousness is as truly matter of observation as, and no more metaphysical (in the sense of non-scientific) than, the knowledge that gets into consciousness through the medium of sensation. And the emotional life of the society to which we belong—its patriotism, its enthusiasms and aversions—constitute a part of what we justly call the objective psychic world, though it may be the subtlest part, least easy to discern. For purposes of science, socially prevalent varieties of emotion are, first, "*describable*," inasmuch as they exist in time, can be identified and named, and to all appearance (and the scientist has to do only with appearance, and his business is to describe the phenomena which appear in their apparent relations) they arise out of observable conditions and issue in observable effects; and, second, they are "*permanent*," inasmuch as emotion, though it be

one's own transient experience, and in a sense incapable of being remembered, is nevertheless remembered in this sense, that one recalls the time of his emotion, his own place at the time, the *fact* that he had an emotion of a kind which he conceives, names, and identifies whenever the like occurs, and also recalls the conditions that appear to him to have occasioned his emotion (and at the remembrance of them a like emotion may return, sometimes even more intense), and one recalls the conduct which appeared, and still appears, to him to have resulted from the emotion; and, third, since one can so far describe his own or another's emotions as to convey by language all this which one keeps in remembrance, can indeed convey all this just as well as what we call the description of a percept can be conveyed, therefore descriptions do, in this sense, make emotional phenomena "*public*" by similarity of testimony, as well as that result is accomplished by the kind of remembrance and description which applies to material things, especially since the apparent conditions and effects of emotion are open to the concurrent observation of the members of a society. It is true that an observer with no subjective experience like that of man could conceive or describe man's subjectivity only in terms of its time, place, occasions, and effects, and the affective quality of it would escape him. He would not know how men feel. But we infer that other individuals of our species feel as we should have to, in order to act as they do under their conditions; that they experience the varieties of feeling that we have experienced and can conceive. Consequently, description conveys to us the same kind of knowledge of their emotions that we have of our own past emotions. And this knowledge is often reinforced by the fact that our imagination of their situation arouses actual present emotion in us, like that which we believe was theirs. The description of emotions is dependent upon the inference of subjective similarity in man; but no whit more so than is that other description which conveys knowledge from one mind to another mind because both minds are capable of similar cognitive states, and assign to words similar meanings. Moreover, our knowledge of this similarity is not due to any mystic, metaphysical insight, but is a true inference from the premises, including the biological

unity of the human species. This inference is reinforced experimentally; that is, the validity of the interpretations based upon it are continually tested in practice, as when we let our associates know how we have understood their conduct, and they testify that we have correctly apprehended their emotional states; and when we know by the responses that we elicit that our signaling of our own feelings has been understood; and when, in order to produce changes in human conduct, we form judgments as to the motives from which such conduct issues, and the motives that will prompt conduct desired, and, by providing the conditions which we infer will affect human motives, find it possible to interrupt conduct which we desire to terminate, and to evoke conduct the motives for which we have supplied. In all this there is nothing involved but phenomena, including the phenomena of our own consciousness and the apparent relations of phenomena, and therefore nothing metaphysical, and no question of the absolute reality which underlies these appearances.

Near the opening of this section we dismissed for the time two of the three questions that are raised by examining sociology from the metaphysician's point of view. We have now discussed the question: Must social phenomena be studied by any non-scientific metaphysical method of approach, or can they be studied satisfactorily by the scientific methods of observation, comparison, and inference? The second question, Are social phenomena caused? has received only incidental attention, and will meet us again hereafter. The third question demands the remainder of this section, namely: Does the teleological nature of sociology, its dealing with valuations and ideals, require us to resort to a non-scientific "philosophic method"? We are told that what *is* is matter for science, but what ought to be is matter for philosophy; that phenomena we can see and describe, but "meanings" and "values" we can only appreciate; therefore they are not matters of science, but of philosophy or metaphysics.

Upon this third question the position here offered for consideration is as follows: Our views of the "meanings" and "values" of things are not to be deduced from our metaphysical

theory of the nature of the absolute reality which expresses itself in phenomena; but it is to be derived inductively from the phenomena themselves, the phenomena "I-value-this" and "This-means-much-to-me" being as true phenomena as any. From observing such phenomena, as we are conscious of them in ourselves and aware of them as revealed by others, we are to arrive at our general statements about "meanings" and "values," and not by deduction from our view concerning "the final goal" of the universe "reduced to unity."¹² If anyone is able by some other process than observation and comparison of phenomena—that is, by other than scientific method—to arrive at a verifiable view of the final goal of creation from which he can deduce teachings concerning the values and valuations involved in human life, then we are glad to have him do so. But as sociologists we cannot do so; nor so long as the method of observation is open to us do we propose to depend on deductions from merely speculative views of the goal of being. We admit that our results will apply only within the sphere of human observation; but as human beings, not to say as sociologists, we are content to understand the worth and meaning of things to human beings, and within the realm of human observation and experience, and not to stretch out after the meanings involved in the total unity of creation in which human experience plays a part.

The values and valuations that are disclosed to human comprehension in human experience are nothing but *valuings*, unless we include also the phenomena which men value. The *valuings* are appreciations of experience, they are phenomena of consciousness, and as true *phenomena*, and so as really matter for science, as the objective things that men value. Whether the things valued are objective things, or thoughts, volitions, or other phenomena of consciousness, it is not the things valued, but the *valuings*, that are in this connection the significant phenomena.

Valuing is a phase or element or quality in every state of consciousness which man can pronounce good. Such *valuings* are perhaps the most significant of social phenomena. Like other social phenomena, they are psychic. Like other psychic phe-

¹² *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. X, p. 355.

nomena, they are not only known in consciousness as subjective, but are also known as objective, being revealed by associates to associates by all the methods of self-revelation that have been mentioned in this section.

Accordingly, the question, "What is of worth?" is answered empirically by answering the question, "What do men value?" and the relative value of different experiences is determined by the concurrent testimony of the competent, as questions are answered about other phenomena that are public and describable.

It is true that the only competent witnesses concerning the value of a given kind of experience are those who have had such experience, but it is equally true that the only competent witnesses concerning a kind of external phenomena are those who have observed them. No single individual is a competent witness concerning external phenomena that he has not observed, any more than concerning valuings that he has not experienced. A witness can tell how a given experience that he has had compares in value with other experiences that he has had. Man is the measure of all things—that is, of all experience—only when he has had all kinds of experience. But each can observe his own valuings and—in the sense explained above—he can describe them. Some kinds of valuings are so universal that practically all men are competent to testify concerning them. Other kinds of valuings are less nearly universal, yet those who have experienced them can sufficiently describe them so that others, who have never had the like, can desire them and be taught to seek them. Those are the most competent witnesses concerning human valuings whose experience has been richest, especially in those types of worth-experience which are higher than others by common consent of those who have had these particular types of experience together with the widest range of other worth-experiences with which to compare them.

It is true, as above set forth, that the affective element in valuation cannot be described in the same way as external phenomena. But it can be named, and its presence and its kind can therefore be expressed in the form of a judgment, and the affective element is regularly *an element in* an experience all of which

can be described except the affective element, and then the affective element may be said to have been made intelligible to all who have had a similar total experience; for it is inferred that the affective element, in case of the person describing, was similar to that which had been known by the listener when the listener had the similar experience. The degree of error to which we are liable in this inference of similarity, when the description of experiences and naming of emotions are supplemented by all the subtle means of self-revelation, has been sufficiently discussed above.

What in human experience is of worth? is a great scientific question. There are numerous kinds of worth, and an adequate conception of them involves the concept of a proportioned harmony of these elements into a whole thought of the worth of life. To arrive at such a thought of life is an intellectual achievement. The method of the achievement is not deduction from a concept of the "final goal of creation reduced to an absolute unity," but is induction from much knowledge of human valuing. Indeed, a concept of the goal of creation cannot be arrived at by any other method than such an induction, whether it be the unconscious induction from a narrow range of experience, which may be only prejudice, however high-sounding the phrases in which it is arrayed, or whether it be a conscious induction from a wide range of human experience, which is as much as to say, a fruit of scientific method.

If specific valuing are experiences, and all our standards and judgments concerning values, and our concept of the whole and harmonious life, are fruits of experience, then, *a fortiori*, our judgments concerning overt acts are empirically derived. That conduct is good which is the condition of experience that is valuable, and, "What conduct is it that leads to experience that is valuable?" is a question that can be answered only by experience. That conduct is good which, "on the whole," and "as far as we can see," and "taking into account all the interests affected," augments the value of experience. And that conduct is bad which, thus broadly considered, appears to make the value of experience less than it would be made by other conduct.

Only a few are able to form judgments of such broad and

far-sighted expediency — judgments which neither unreasonably discount the future and the unintended result, nor excessively regard the clamorous interests of the immediate actors, and which are so general in their application as to forearm man to meet the vicissitudes in which he must play his part. Only the few are able to make any valuable contribution toward the equipment of duty-judgments prevalent in the society of which they are members. After these judgments of the wisest, most far-sighted and constructive minds have become traditionally accepted rules of duty, they are enforced by priests, potentates, and teachers of a lesser caliber. These enforce the traditionally accepted duty-code of their society by appeal to every conceivable sanction natural and supernatural, enforce them by the smiles and frowns that greet the earliest choices and impulsive acts of childhood, enforce them by the continuous pressure of the social approvals and disapprovals in which we are immersed as in an atmosphere, enforce them by the self-approval and remorse that turn in upon ourselves the judgments which we have learned to pass upon others, and enforce them, and at the same time explain them after the manner of the prescientific metaphysical stage of thought, by calling them instincts of our nature, finger-marks of God, corollaries deduced from the nature of the absolute. There is a true sense in which every broad and far-sighted judgment of expediency is a corollary of the nature of things, even though man has derived his knowledge of that law of conduct experimentally from his own failures and successes, and not from antecedent knowledge of the absolute nor from implanted instinct. It is the business of sociology, not to bar the path of investigation with a metaphysical abstraction, with a big word instead of an explanation, a stone offered to the hunger of the mind, but to investigate, that is, to apply the methods of science to answering the question: Whence come the traditionally accepted and socially enforced judgments of conduct; why do they differ in different eras and in different societies; and how, from having first prescribed duties only toward the members of the group within which they arose, leaving liberty to steal with a clear conscience, or even with a sense of merit, the property or the wife or the head of any member of another group, do they finally

extend in scope till they inculcate the universal brotherhood of man? And sociology must approach in the scientific spirit not only the question: Have existing moral judgments a natural history, and, if so, how can it be traced? but also the further question: Do these existing moral requirements actually prescribe the wisest judgments of expediency; and, if not, can they be amended so as better to reveal the method of more complete and harmonious experience within the conditions of actual society? If the prevailing judgments of value have a natural history, it is a history of social evolution; if progress in the formation of such judgments is still possible, what else can that progress be than the discovery of the method of the conditioning of experience, all of which is socially conditioned, and all of which in turn constitutes the social conditions?

Everyone admits that hypothetical imperatives are inductions from experience. The sociologist has nothing to do with any but hypothetical imperatives. And he should proceed upon the hypothesis that all the rational imperatives governing human action, when thoroughly understood, will be seen to be hypothetically justified; that is, they will be seen to prescribe the means to an end that is worth while—an end the worth of which can be apprehended by men, value to be realized in human experience. Either this is true, or human life is necessarily a sacrifice to a world-end outside of man; or else it has no rational end, and life is a nightmare, and the search for a reasoned law of conduct is vain. No one is justified in adopting the pessimistic conclusion that the conscious life of man has no rational end, nor the semi-pessimistic conclusion that man's earthly experience has no end in itself, and no meaning save as a part of a larger world-order that is beyond the scope of human observation, until the attempt to discover the end *in* human experience has been exhausted and has failed. No one shall warn us off from that attempt.

Moreover, even though there be *also* an end attained by human life which is not *in* human life, certain it is that there are *values in* human experience. If they do not constitute the whole of the rational end of human action, they are at least a definite and highly important class of phenomena, the complex and peculiar

conditioning of which can be investigated. This justifies the existence of a special science of human valuings to study their rise, to compare them with each other, to formulate out of the elements furnished by experience a more and more adequate concept of them in their harmony and completeness, and in the light of experience to distinguish those forms of conduct which are promotive of human values from those that destroy, disorganize, and degrade life by preventing the realization of such value-phenomena.

If the laws of conduct thus derived were subject to higher laws involved in a nature-of-things not revealed in human experience, then, if anybody could by any possibility get at the content of such absolute laws, they would be superior to the laws prescribing the conduct conducive to human experience-values. The latter would be only laws for the attainment of a part which is subject to the greater whole, just as the so-called laws of political economy, in so far as they are guides to conduct, are subject to ethical laws. As economics is a science of a part, so the science of human experience-values would then be a science of a part, yet a true science, since human experience-values are a distinct kind of phenomena rising from a special complexus of conditioning. And we do not admit that any other values of which they can be a part is discoverable to human intelligence, but maintain that the whole harmony of values realizable in human experience is the highest and largest end that can be formulated by human intelligence for the guidance of human action; that ethics is the formulation of that concept and discovery of the method of the conditioning of those values.

If this be true, or even if it be true that the human experience-values, though subordinate to some world-end, are yet proper objects of science, and our knowledge of them founded upon observation and inference, then any trustworthy concept of possible values must be an induction from knowledge of that which already has been, though the induction may outrun all that ever was in any single instance, gathering elements from the widest observation, and inferring the possibility of new combinations from knowledge of fragmentary realizations. The thought of the

values of human experience in their completeness and harmony is an object of scientific quest, and likewise the laws of conduct tending toward that end are as much so as the laws of conditioning of any other phenomena. Such conduct and experience must be social conduct and experience; its conditioning must be social conditioning; such life must be socially realized; such science must be sociology—science in the sense which these papers try to explain. Though it is true that the logical processes are the same in all science, yet the application of them must be adapted to the nature of the phenomena investigated. The sciences of the psychic can never enter upon the *Blütezeit*, prophesied by Wundt and Haeckel, until sociologists cease merely to carry over the mental habits developed by studies of the non-psychic, and to test the scientific character of their work merely by comparing it with the work of physicists and biologists. Forgetting those things that are behind, yet remembering all things that are behind, they must press toward the mark of a higher calling. They must avoid the strabismus that is due to looking with one eye at the physical while they look with the other at the psychic, focus attention upon psychic phenomena, find in them their problems and see what these phenomena *are*, not what they resemble, what courses of investigation they require, not how far the devices of investigation developed by other sciences can be applied to them. Then ethics, the study of life, may pass, as the study of material phenomena has passed, from the metaphysical into the scientific stage. Who would obstruct the endeavor to speed the day, or despair before the effort has been fairly made?

Motives to right conduct deduced from notions of the absolute have only a speculative foundation save as the name “absolute” is given to doctrines derived by induction from experience of life. It may be true, as we are warned, that sanctions of authority are crumbling away. If so, we must hope that the demands of authority will be reaffirmed or replaced by the motives of enlightenment.

[To be continued]